

## 1.1 Believing in God

**agnosticism** not being sure whether God exists

**atheism** believing that God does not exist

**conversion** when your life is changed by giving yourself to God

**free will** the idea that human beings are free to make their own choices

**miracle** something which seems to break a law of science and makes you think only God could have done it

**moral evil** actions done by humans which cause suffering

**natural evil** things which cause suffering but have nothing to do with humans

**numinous** the feeling of the presence of something greater than you

**omni-benevolent** the belief that God is all-good

**omnipotent** the belief that God is all-powerful

**omniscient** the belief that God knows everything that has happened and everything that is going to happen

**prayer** an attempt to contact God, usually through words

## 1.2 Matters of Life and Death

**abortion** the removal of a foetus from the womb before it can survive

**assisted suicide** providing a seriously ill person with the means to commit suicide

**euthanasia** the painless killing of someone dying from a painful disease

**immortality of the soul** the idea that the soul lives on after the death of the body

**near-death experience** when someone about to die has an out of body experience

**non-voluntary euthanasia** ending someone's life painlessly when they are unable to ask, but you have good reason for thinking they would want you to do so

**paranormal** unexplained things which are thought to have spiritual causes eg ghosts, mediums

**quality of life** the idea that life must have some benefits for it to be worth living

**reincarnation** the belief that, after death, souls are reborn in a new body

**resurrection** the belief that, after death, the body stays in the grave until the end of the world when it is raised

**sanctity of life** the belief that life is holy and belongs to God

**voluntary euthanasia** ending life painlessly when someone in great pain asks for death

## 1.3 Marriage and Family

**adultery** a sexual act between a married person and someone other than their marriage partner

**civil partnership** a legal ceremony giving a homosexual couple the same legal rights as a husband and wife

**cohabitation** living together without being married

**contraception** intentionally preventing pregnancy from occurring

**faithfulness** staying with your marriage partner and having sex only with them

**homosexuality** sexual attraction to the same sex

**nuclear family** mother, father and children living as a unit

**pre-marital sex** sex before marriage

**procreation** making a new life

**promiscuity** having sex with a number of partners without commitment

**re-constituted family** where two sets of children (stepbrothers and stepsisters) become one family when their divorced parents marry each other

**re-marriage** marrying again after being divorced from a previous marriage

## 1.4 Religion and Community Cohesion

**community cohesion** a common vision and shared sense of belonging for all groups in society

**discrimination** treating people less favourably because of their ethnicity/gender/colour/sexuality/age/class

**ethnic minority** a member of an ethnic group (race) which is much smaller than the majority group

**interfaith marriages** marriage where the husband and wife are from different religions

**multi-ethnic society** many different races and cultures living together in one society

**multi-faith society** many different religions living together in one society

**prejudice** believing some people are inferior or superior without even knowing them

**racial harmony** different races/colours living together happily

**racism** the belief that some races are superior to others

**religious freedom** the right to practise your religion and change your religion

**religious pluralism** accepting all religions as having an equal right to coexist

**sexism** discriminating against people because of their gender (being male or female)